Malayalam T.V. programmes

*253. SHRI B. V. ABDULLA KOYA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) by when the Malayalam television programmes from Trivandrum Doordarshan are proposed to be transmitted from Cochin and Calicut; and

(b) by when the microwave system for this purpose would be ready?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) and (b) The TV transmitters at Cochin and Calicut will be in a position to relay programmes of Doordarshan Kendra Trivandrum when the necessary linkage through microwave circuit is established. Doordarshan have for this purpose already placed an order on Department of Telecommunications for providing the required links.

Encouragement to fruit-juice based beverages

*254. SHRI KISHOR MEHTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a policy to encourage the production of fruit-juice based beverages;

(b) what is the excise payable for 'Ready to Serve' beverages containing more than 10 per cent juice;

(c) whether it is a fact that some collectorate viz. Calcutta and States like U.P. and Gujarat are demanding 15 per cent excise; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) Government desires to encourage fruit processing Industry.

(b) On fruit juices put up in unit containers, the rate of excise duty is 10 per cent. On fruit juice based beverages which contains only small quantities of fruit content the rate of excise duty is 15 per cent.

(c) and (d) In the past, there were varying practices in classification of fruit juice based beverages. The matter was examined by the Government and instructions have been issued to all Collectors of Central Excise so as to ensure Uniformity in the practice of assessment.

Loans to big industrialists written off

*255. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "Plea to probe banks writing off 250 crores a year", published in the free Press Journal on June 13, 1987;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the Nationalised Banks write off Rs. 250 crores loan given to big industrialists every year; and

(c) if so, what are the details for the last three years, the names of the industrialists whose loans were written off, the amounts involved and the names of the concerned banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) to (c) Government have seen the news item referred to in the question.

The public sector banks make provision every year out of their annual income for meeting their liability towards bad and doubtful debts to the satisfaction of their central statutory auditors at the time of finalisation of their annual accounts. The banks write off their advances only after exhausting all possible avenues of recovery. Reserve Bank of India have issued detailed guidelines to the banks indicating the factors to be kept to view before write offs are made.